HUNTER'S GUIDE AND TRAPPER'S COMPANION

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THE

HUNTER'S GUIDE,

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AND

Trapper's Companion.

A

COMPLETE GUIDE

In all the various Methods by which to Capture all kinds of Game, Fur Animals, &c. Also, Full Directions how to

Cure and Tan all Kinds of Skins, &c., &c.

TOGETHER WITH

NUMEROUS ARTS, SECRETS,

And much other Valuable and Interesting Reading Matter not to be obtained elsewhere.

By an Experienced Woodsman.

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PREFACE.

The publishers of this work having had for several years frequent calls for a reliable and complete Guide to Hunting and Trapping, &c., and as there has been no cheap work in the market and but one or two works on the subject at any price, have determined to publish the present work with a view to supply the demands of their own trade and also to furnish the public a work at once cheap and reliable. In a work of this size and price it is of course impossible to give at length all the various and diverse methods, but its author has endeavored to give the best and most successful methods as followed by old and experienced hunters and trappers who have made trapping their business through life. The author has availed himself of many facts from various works on Natural History, and while in many points imperfections will be found, yet, as a whole, he trusts this work will be for its size and price the best work on the subject. This work is designed for those who have not had extensive experience, but those who have made a business of trapping and hunting will find it of value.

With the hope that it will prove of value to every reader it is presented to the public.

TO THE READER.

It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that this work has been prepared for the purpose of supplying the want of a cheap work on hunting, trapping, &c. No work at a low price has ever been published. The present volume is intended to furnish such a work, and at a price that will allow it to be obtained by all who desire it. We have not tried to exhaust the subject, for no book of the size of this can do the subject justice, but we think after a perusal, the reader will say that what is herein given is *worth the money*, which is all we ask. There is only *one* really reliable "Trapper's Guide," other than our present small one. The book to which we refer is published by the "Oneida Community," and is a large volume of 280 octavo pages, with thirty-two *full page* illustrations, and numerous wood cuts of traps and trapper's appliances. It is well printed and bound in cloth, gilt; Price $1.50. Among its contents are numerous narratives of hunting and trapping, and very much interesting and instructive matter to the general reader, and the trapper in particular. The second edition has been published, and the publishers of this work will always have the book in stock, and will at any time mail it to any address on receipt of the price, $1.50. They also supply "The Woods and Waters of the Saranac," by Alfred B. Street. A large, cloth, gilt book, of 350 pages, devoted to hunting and fishing; experiences among the wilds of Northern New York; price $2.00, The author of this work confidentially recommends both the above named works to all who wish to pursue the subject farther than this book carries it; but he also trusts that his work may be, for its size and price, acceptably received by those for whom it is intended by

THE AUTHOR.

The Hunter's Guide.

THE SEASON FOR TRAPPING.

Winter is the best season for hunting and trapping, as then all furs are more valuable and in better condition; but trapping is carried on successfully for five or six months in the year, or at any time between October and April. From May 1st, to September, furs are worthless. In fact, it is of little use to trap except in the late fall and early spring. Most fur animals are in their prime about the first of November, although Muskrat and Beaver is not fully in its prime until near the middle of winter Experience is necessary as in any other occupation, as a trapper may commence too early and thereby get poor fur, which is not only unprofitable for them but also for the dealer and manufacturer. The leading fur in this country is Mink, and it commands the highest price. Opposum and Muskrat are the most generally worn, their price placing them within the reach of the masses. In the United States, New York is the great fur depot. Over one hundred firms in that City being engaged in the fur trade. The value of the whole amount of the fur trade of the world is about one hundred millions yearly. In Russia, Raccoon fur is the staple. In England, France and Germany, Muskrat is preferred.

THE ART OF TRAPPING.

Many animals are valuable not only for their furs but for food. Those valuable only for food can be run down by dogs or shot. But probably the most profitable method is to capture them by steel traps, which can now be made at reasonable prices, and in size to suit all circumstances. Among other methods is capturing them by

POISONING.

Strychnine is most generally used. Take what can be put in a common percussion cap and put it firmly in a piece of tallow, not larger than a walnut, and leave it where the animal will find it. After swallowing the dose the animal will drop dead within a half dozen rods of the place. Poisoning is not in favor, as it spoils the skin and fur.

SHOOTING.

This is the principal method in Russia, but it is a wasteful method. Some manufacturers consider shot furs as of hardly any value for working, as a shot striking at one end of an animal will frequently run the entire length, shaving the hair like a razor, and of course spoiling the looks, necessitating that portion to be slit and the piece taken out. Shooting is going out of date with many trappers.

THE DEAD FALL.

This can be made anywhere with an axe and plenty of work. It is at best a clumsy contrivance, but is much used in some parts of the country. Take two large poles—or if for bears or

large animals, two logs, and place one over the other, keeping them in place by four stakes, two on each side. The upper log should be raised at one end high enough above the lower one to admit the entrance of an animal. It is kept in that position by the contrivance commonly called the "figure four." A pen is then made with sticks, brush, &c., and on one side of this structure, but at right angles to it, and the spindle projects obliquely into this pen, so that the bait attached to it is about eight inches beyond the sides of the pole. To reach the bait the animal has to place his body between the poles and at right angles to them, and on pulling the spindle springs the "figure four" and is crushed. The only objection to this contrivance is that it takes quite a long time to make and set one, thus taking time, and moreover, animals thus caught are exposed to a catch by other animals which is not the case with those caught in steel traps. Besides this, the "dead fall" is quite uncertain, and some sportsmen will have nothing to do with them whatever.

STEEL TRAPS.

After all other methods have been tried and practiced by professional trappers, none has as yet been found to equal the old fashioned steel trap. These if well made are the safest and surest, and certainly cheapest method of capturing fur animals. They can be easily carried, can be set anywhere, even under water, can be attended in great numbers and what is of more value the steel trap does not injure the fur. There are many and numerous

traps, each adapted for different animals. The essential properties of a good trap are about as follows.

The Jaws should not be too thin or sharp cornered. If made of sheet iron or too sharp the spring will quite often cut off the limb of an animal, and nearly all animals that get away do so by self-amputation. Neither should the pan be too large. A pan filling the whole space may seem to increase the animal's chances for being caught, but it is not so. When an animal springs a trap by treading on the edge of the pan his foot is near the jaw, and instead of being caught it is liable to be thrown out by a stroke of the jaw, whereas if he treads on a small pan his foot is in the center of the sweep of the jaw and he is very sure of being caught.

The spring of a trap should be carefully examined and be *sure* that it is strong enough, and be well tempered, if not it may break when set in the water, or in dry, cold weather; all springs and jaws must work *easily*, great care should be taken as to this. Be sure in purchasing to attend to all these points and examine the trap carefully throughout; this is of great importance. In trapping there are various land animals, such as the Marten, that it is necessary to provide against their being devoured by other animals before the hunter reaches them, and also to prevent their breaking the traps by violence or gnawing off their limbs. Such a contrivance is the *spring pole*, which is made as follows: If a small tree can be found near the tarp, trim it and use it for a spring as it is. If

none is near the trap cut one of sufficient size and having driven it firmly in the ground, bend down the top and fasten the chain ring into it, and fasten the pole in its bent position by a notch or hook on a small tree, only driving a stick into the ground; when the animal is caught his struggles will unhook the pole which will go up with a jerk, carrying him into the air out of reach of prowlers, and where he cannot gnaw himself free.

THE SLIDING POLE

is prepared thus: Cut a pole ten foot long and leave branches on the small end to prevent the ring slipping off. Place this pole near your trap in an inclined position with its small end reaching into the deepest part of the stream and its large end secured at the bank by a hook driven into the ground; slip the ring of your chain on this and see that it can traverse freely down the full length of the pole; when the animal is caught it will plunge desperately into the region toward which the pole leads, of course the ring slides down to the end of the pole at the bottom of the stream, and with a short chain prevents the animal from rising to the surface or reaching the shore. The *clog* is intended to *encumber* large animals so that while they can draw it about they will not tear themselves on the trap. Probably few of our readers will ever have occasion to use it.

BAITING ANIMALS.

An old trapper says "never put bait on the pan of the trap." Old fashioned traps were always

made with holes in the pan to tie on bait, and nearly all green trappers imagine that the true way is to attract the animals *nose* straight into the trap. This is not the way by any means. It is very rare to catch an animal by the head, most usually they are caught by a leg. If an animal pulls the bait on a trap he pulls the wrong way to spring it, and should he spring it his position is such that he is quite sure to escape. Then again bait on the pan calls the animal's attention to the trap instead of attracting his attention from it. The right way is to put the bait so that in attempting to get it the animal will put his *foot* on the pan. This can be done in several ways, but this general direction will suffice. Place the bait either on a stick above the trap or in an inclosure so arranged that the animal must step over the trap to reach it. As in all other things judgment must be used and experience will teach the best and most sure ways to succeed in trapping. Some young trappers may enquire *how many* traps they could attend to. The number of course cannot be definitely stated, but anywhere from 100 to 150 can easily be attended by one person. The principal trouble is transporting the traps. If you take all you can carry you will not have too many. Trapping is a *paying* occupation only in new districts. Some trappers have caught as many as fifty muskrats in one night, but of course this is much above the average. Good judgment is needed in any one in order to become a skillful trapper.

CAPTURING ANIMALS.

We propose briefly describing some of the principal animals likely to be met with by the trapper and will begin with

THE MINK.

This animal is found in North America, Asia and Europe; of late years its fur has been the most popular of any, and has commanded very high prices. It is of a dark brown color, short legs, long body and neck, and bushy tail. There are two varieties in this country, one small, dark colored, and the other larger and light colored. The breeding season with the Mink commences about May 1st, and the females bring forth three to six at a litter. Mink can be taken in steel traps on land or in the water. Most trappers prefer to take them on land. When their hole cannot be found, make a hole by the side of a root or stump; three sides should be banked up with bark or wood and set the trap at the entrance. Fish, Birds, or Muskrat Flesh should be used for bait; cut it in small pieces and put into the cavity beyond the trap so that the animal will have to step over the trap in order to take the bait; conceal the trap by covering with leaves, or rotten wood; smoke the bait in very cold weather so as to give it a stronger smell, as Mink can be attracted a very great distance by the scent of the bait. A good plan to attract this animal is to take eels, or minnows, cut them in small pieces and put in a bottle loosely corked and let it hang in the sunshine for two or three weeks in summer, when an oil will be formed which

has a very strong odor; a few drops of this oil on a bit of wood will draw Mink a long distance.

THE MUSKRAT.

This animal is from 13 to 15 inches in length; its tail is two-thirds the length of its body and is two-edged, covered with scales and thin short hair, the edges being fringed. Its hind feet are slightly webbed; they are excellent swimmers and will swim 10 or 15 rods under water without breathing. They feed on roots and grass, but will eat almost anything. They mostly inhabit ponds and sluggish streams. In summer they live mostly in hollow trees, or in the banks, and sometimes even in the winter. The females have from six to nine at a litter. There are various modes of capturing the muskrat. They are sometimes speared, but no means is so sure as trapping them. The traps should be set in the places where they feed and around their holes, and as a general thing about two inches under water; bait is not needed except when game is scarce. The musk of this animal will draw at any distance. Bait should be fastened to a stick and stuck over the trap in such a position that the animal will have to pass over the trap in order to reach it. Fasten the trap so the chain will lead him into deep water and drown him; be careful to not allow him room to entangle himself or he may gnaw off a leg and get away.

THE MARTEN.

The Marten belongs to the weasel family and is about as large as the mink; it varies but little from

it in size or form, except that its feet are larger and hairy to the toes, and its tail is somewhat larger and of a darker color. There are many varieties of the Marten. The fur of the American Marten is a yellowish brown, but varies greatly according to locality, &c., &c. They generally live in hollow trees, but sometimes in the ground. They live on birds, rabbits, mice, &c.; beechnuts are also a favorite with them. They are very active and will catch squirrels easily. They breed in March or April and have from three to five young at a time. Martens are captured in traps the same as the mink. The traps should be set in hollow logs or trees and secured from being covered by snows.

THE SABLE.

In Natural History the Sable is classed with the Marten, which it greatly resembles; there are two species. They are not very prolific, seldom bringing forth five and more generally only three. They live in burrows chiefly by the banks of rivers, although occasionally they have nests in hollow trees. Their food is various according to season. They devour the hare in great numbers. In winter however they are said to feed on berries. The fur of the Sable is in great request. It is the most beautiful of all the Martens; a rich brown marked with white about the head and tinged with gray on the neck. A single skin will sometimes bring $100 in market. The Russian Sable is monopolised by the nobility, and very few skins ever get to America. The Sable can be tamed very

easily. They are captured the same as Mink or Marten.

THE FISHER.

This belongs to the Weasel family, resembling the Marten, although much larger. An average animal will measure two feet from nose to roots of tail. It has large feet, short, stout and covered with hair. Their fur is dark brown or black. This animal is found in the cold, snowy regions of the North, and they live nearly the same as the Marten, breeding at about the same time, but only bringing forth two to four at a litter. They can be taken in traps same as Mink and Marten, only the barricade must be stronger.

THE FOX.

Although most abundant at the North, yet the Fox family are numerous and are found in all latitudes. There are said to be fourteen varieties of the genus Fox. It is a very important fur bearing animal, but the Silver Gray is the most rare and most sought after of any. Only a few hundred skins are annually obtained, and a single skin frequently brings $150 to $200. The Fox belongs to the Dog or wolf family; all the different species closely resemble each other. They feed on almost anything, either animal or vegetable.

They are very stealthy and cunning, and their tricks are very remarkable. They measure about three feet from nose to tip of tail, and weigh about 20 lbs. They breed in February or March, and bring forth from three to nine; they burrow in the

earth, but can sometimes be found in rocks and hollow trees. Great care should be taken to prevent the smell of the trap from alarming the Fox, and it should be well smeared with blood and let dry, or beeswax melted and rubbed over the trap will answer the same purpose. There are many and numerous other tricks which can be used to advantage, but we have no room in this work to describe them fully.

THE OTTER.

This animal is found in nearly all parts of the world. It is aquatic in its habits, living always near streams. Its color is nearly like the Mink, and its fur thick and short. Its legs appear to be set on the sides of its body, which makes it an awkward appearing animal when on land. The weight of this animal averages twenty pounds. The Otter is an excellent swimmer and it catches its food, which is principally fish, with the greatest ease. They usually burrow in the banks of streams, entering under water. They breed in April and bring forth not over four at a time, generally only two. They are a very rambling animal and quite difficult to trap. The steel trap is the best with which to trap the Otter, and it should be very carefully set. It should be set on one side of the path, because the Otter's legs stand out from his body, and were the trap set in the middle of the path he would be likely to put his feet on each side of it, instead of in it. A small hole should be made in the earth with a hatchet, and the trap sunk so as to be nearly level with the path; leaves and moss should be packed under the

jaws and spring, and the top covered with dry leaves, &c. To fasten the trap cut a tree of small size and set it upright near enough the path to help guide the animal into the trap, supporting it in that position and securing the trap and game by withing the top to another tree; the ring should be slipped on the butt and fastened with a wedge. The trap is now well set, but the trapper must never go near the trap after it is set until it is sprung, for the smell of the Otter is very delicate. Other methods are pursued by different trappers, and in fact each has his particular way. There is a variety of the Otter called the Sea Otter. Its fur is very valuable and of great beauty. These cannot easily be trapped, but are hunted in boats and shot. By careful watching, however, they could undoubtedly be taken in the steel trap.

THE BEAVER.

This animal belongs to the family of the Muskrat; in fact the two resemble each other very much except in size. A full grown Beaver weighs about seventy-five pounds, generally less. The tail of the Beaver is the most noticeable part. It is oval in shape, flattened on the upper and under sides, and covered with a species of hairy scales. It is generally believed that the Beaver uses its tail as a help in building its huts or dams. The Beaver usually commences to build its huts in September. These are nearly like Muskrat's, only of necessity larger and stronger. The entrance is under water, and they are usually large enough to hold nine to twelve animals each. Beavers sometimes live on the

banks of large rivers and lakes and have their holes in the banks. The Beaver breeds in April or May and have from two to four young at a time. The young remain with the parents three years. The food of the Beaver consists of various kinds of bark and a large kind of root which is plenty in large rivers and lakes. In summer they eat various things, berries, &c., &c. Beavers are trapped principally. There are various ways of taking Beaver; the following is the best way to catch them in winter. Find their ponds, make a hole in the ice near the shore and near the hut, then cut a tree about two inches in diameter, press the top together and shove the whole under the ice; under the butt a platform should be placed by driving stakes, or by any other means, on which the trap should be set; fill the hole in the ice with snow and allow it to freeze. The Beaver, when passing, will discover the newly cut tree, and will proceed to the butt to secure its food, and as it will gnaw it off towards the shore over the trap, it will be liable to be taken. Different trappers have different methods for catching this animal, but the above is a good as any.

THE RACCOON.

This animal belongs to the Bear family and is only found on the Western Continent. The variety of most value is the common Raccoon. Its body is about two feet long and its head resembles the Fox. It feeds on nuts, corn, frogs, fish, &c., &c. It is a good climber and generally rears its young in a hollow tree. It breeds in April or May and brings forth four to six young at a time. The Raccoon is generally taken by setting traps in the paths which

they make in corn fields or by setting traps by the side of the streams where they live. They should be baited with fresh fish or salt cod fish, roasted so as to give it a strong smell. There is not much cunning to the Raccoon and with their acute sense of smell they seldom pass a trap without being taken.

THE WOLF.

There are many varieties of the Wolf but they are in form nearly the same, although they vary in color from black through all shades to white; gray however, is the most common color. They are lean and gaunt animals, but very fleet and powerful. They are ferocious but cowardly; they belong to the family of the Dog and Fox, and are generally found in packs. They destroy Sheep and Deer, frequently destroying whole herds in a single night. They feed on all animals, and will *pursue*, kill and eat human flesh if pressed by hunger. Their average length is about four feet from nose to tail. Wolves breed in April and May, having from five to nine or ten young at a time. To capture Wolves the steel trap is the best. The following is an old trapper's method of trapping them. Find two trees standing eighteen inches or more apart, put the bait between the trees and set a trap on each side of it; smoke the traps over hemlock boughs to destroy the odor of iron. After setting the traps carefully, cover them with finely powdered rotten wood; the chain should be fastened to a log weighing twenty pounds or more. Rub some asafœtida on the trees to attract the attention of the Wolves. In case trees cannot be found near

enough together, get two logs and lean them against a tree. It is better to use old logs than to cut fresh ones.

THE BEAR.

The Bear inhabits nearly all portions of the globe, in all latitudes from the North to the South. There are many varieties which space will not allow us to notice. They feed on roots, nuts, berries, &c., in fact on any thing eatable. The farmers on the frontier suffer much loss from their depredations. They have a great liking for honey. They sleep through the coldest part of the year and breed in May and June, not generally bringing forth but two young. The cubs are hid in hollow trees and caves until large enough to follow their dam. Hunting Bears with fire arms is dangerous, besides being likely to damage their fur. They can be easily trapped in a large steel trap. The hunter should choose a spot where there is a fallen log and then place another log across it making a pen in shape like the letter V, place the bait at the inner angle and the trap at the entrance, so that the Bear cannot get the bait without having to pass over the trap, cover the trap with moss and leaves. Some hunters put a small stick under the pan to prevent small animals from springing it, but which the foot of the Bear will break. The top should have a chain eighteen inches long and be fastened to a clog weighing 30 lbs. Bait with meat, and also put a little honey on heated stones near the trap. Bears are not afraid of traps and enter one readily.

THE BADGER.

This animal also belongs to the Bear family. There are three or four species. Its fur is in considerable demand and the European species furnish from 60,000 to 75,000 skins annually.

The Badger is a quiet, inoffensive animal, but when attacked is a terrible antagonist. It is about 2 feet long, with short tail and small flat head. It lives in the solitary woods in burrows. Its fur is valuable and is used in many ways. The Badger is taken in traps placed at the mouth of their holes. As the Badger is very cunning, the traps should be as much concealed as possible.

THE WILD CAT.

This is of the Lynx species; the average is about two and one half feet long and weighing from 15 to 25 pounds. There are several varieties. The principal one is of a reddish brown color. The fur is full and soft. This animal is cowardly, never attacking anything as large as itself. It feeds on birds, &c. It can be taken in the same manner as the Raccoon or Mink, baiting with meat. If you can find a place where they have killed any game, set your trap and they will be quite sure to visit it. The Wild Cat is very strong, and when pursued is very ferocious.

THE LYNX.

Of this animal there are several species, but those of most importance are the European and Canada Lynx. The Canada Lynx is the one found in America. It is a stupid animal and easily trapped. The directions given for trapping other animals

will apply to trapping the Lynx, therefore it is unnecessary to repeat them here.

THE AMERICAN PANTHER.

This is one of the largest animals of the Cat species. It is found in all latitudes. A full grown Panther will measure from 8 to 10 feet in length; their color is a reddish brown; they are armed with sharp teeth and claws and are very active. They feed on Deer chiefly, which they catch by crawling upon them in a stealthy manner, or by pouncing upon them from a tree. They frequently in new settlements carry off Sheep and young cattle; they are good climbers and take to a tree when pursued, from which they are easily brought down by the rifle. This is the usual way of taking them. They rarely attack a man; they are cowardly, but when wounded are dangerous. They can easily be taken in traps; find where they have killed a Deer and secrete the trap near the remains, and you will catch them when they return. This is also true of many other large animals.

THE WOLVERINE

Is found in many portions of British America, and also in the wild portions of North America. It is about three feet long and its tail about one foot in length. Its habits are much like the Marten. They possess great strength and are powerfully built. Their color is a dark brown. The Wolverine is a great mischief maker and causes much trouble to the trapper. They will follow a line of traps for miles, devouring the bait and animals caught, and tearing down the traps. The Indians

call it the Devil, and from its cunning, sagacity and destructive propensities it appears to deserve the name.

THE SKUNK.

Although generally despised, this animal furnishes valuable fur and deserves the attention of the trapper. It is of the Weasel family, with small head, projecting nose, bright eyes and short ears. It is white and black, but some are almost entirely white and others black. It is a nocturnal animal, living in the fields in the Summer. It breeds in April or May, and brings forth five to eight young, which are reared in its haunts until large enough to take care of themselves. This animal is best taken in traps, which may be set at their holes covered with earth or leaves and baited with meat in small pieces scattered over it. They are not cunning and are easily trapped. The only real trouble is to get the fur without the liability of catching a charge of their perfumery. A sharp blow across the lower part of the back will paralyze their muscles and render them harmless.

THE OPPOSSUM.

This animal is an inhabitant of the Southern parts of the United States and also of Australia. It is about two feet long or a little less, short built, with large ears, round and nearly naked. It has five toes and walks on the sole of its foot like a bear. It is nocturnal in its habits and lives on corn, nuts, berries, &c. The female is very productive, frequently bringing forth from six to thirteen young

and having three or four litters a year. The Opossum is easily trapped in the same manner as the Raccoon and Badger. When caught they feign death, and betray no signs of life even if considerably tortured; undoubtedly this gave use to the by-word "playing 'possum."

THE SQUIRREL.

In America the fur of the Squirrel is of little value to the fur trade and they are only trapped for food or to get rid of them. The European varicty is however much more valuable, and millions are brought into market every year. The Siberian and Russian Squirrel however produce the most handsome and finest fur. In taking Squirrel set the trap on the upper rail of a fence near where they frequent, set a pole with an ear of corn or some other Squrirel food fastened to the end of it up against the side of the fence, leaning in such a position as to bring the bait over the trap at a height of six or nine inches. When the Squirrel reaches to get the bait he will get into the trap.

THE WOODCHUCK.

This animal burrows almost exclusively. They are found on both continents and there are several varieties. The Prairie Dog of the plains is a species of Woodchuck. The skin of the Woodchuck is not very valuable for fur, but for whiplashes it is unsurpassed. These animals are easily taken by placing set traps completely covered, but not baited, at the mouth of their holes.

THE DEER.

Although one of the most important animals to the hunter and trapper, we have left it for the last of which we shall speak. It belongs to the family of ruminating animals and embraces a great number of species, from the very smallest Musk Deer, up to enormous Moose Deer which frequently weighs 10 to 1200 pounds, and stands from six to eight feet in height. The Musk Deer is very small, only weighing from five to ten lbs., and not larger than a common Rabbit. The kind with which trappers in America are principally interested is the common or Red Virginia Deer, and also the Black Tailed Deer, which is found west of the Mississippi. The various species differ little in general characteristics and a description of the Red Deer will be sufficient for all purposes. This animal is found in nearly all the United States, except where thickly settled and also abounds in Canada. Although sometimes found alone, they generally go in companies of two or more. They frequently visit the settlements and eat wheat, corn, cabbages, &c., if they can get them. Their wild food consists mostly of twigs, grass, berries, &c., with nuts and acorns in their season. In winter they retire to high lands. They form what is called "yards" by trampling down the snow, and live in large herds. Their principal enemies are the Panther and Wolves. They are sometimes attacked and whole "yards" destroyed. Wolves even pursue Deer and finally capture them by running them down. There are many and various ways used by hunters and trappers in taking Deer. A favorite one is to shoot

them by night, when they are feeding by the water side. They are also taken by dogs, who drive them into the lake or river, and then they are dispatched by the hunter in his canoe. In shooting Deer the proceedings are as follows: The hunter procures a boat, gun and lamp. The lamp, (or pine, if no lamp can be had) is placed at the bow of the boat, so it will shine forward of the boat, and at the same time by its glare conceal the hunter who sits behind it. The game must be approached very carefully, as the least rustle will frighten the animal. The reflected light from the Deer's eyes show his position to the hunter. The boat if carefully managed, will approach very near, and the Deer will stand and gaze at the light until within a few yards and near enough for a good shot. This is the principal way of taking Deer, but they can be trapped, but hunters seem rather disinclined to trap them unless it is necessary. The trap for taking Deer should be a very strong one, with spiked jaw and so shaped as when sprung they will remain open 1-2 an inch so as to prevent breaking bones. It should be set in the path of the Deer where it enters the water if possible, and should be concealed by some covering. The trap should not be clogged or fastened as then the Deer would break away or leave a limb, but if the trap is loose he will after tiring himself out lie down and will generally be found within a few rods of the spot where he can be easily despatched when found by the hunter. A Canadian trapper gives the following directions for trapping Deer in winter. He says: "Fall a maple or basswood tree near where

the Deer haunt. These trees are their favorite browse, make a small hole in the snow, close to the top of a tree, set your trap, lower it into the hole and shove it to one side, 18 or 20 inches through the snow. Finally take some deer-scent obtained from the glands on the hind legs of the Deer, and which has a very strong odor, and rub it on the trap. This done, when the Deer comes to feed on the twigs of the fallen tree, you will be pretty sure to take one.

THE MOOSE.

The Moose is the largest of the Deer family, and its habits are much the same as the common deer. It is, however, an inhabitant of the Northern and more snowy regions, going as far North as the Arctic Ocean. Its color is yellowish brown, and it frequents mostly high woodlands. Its hair in winter is coarse and long, while in Summer it is short and soft. The Moose weighs when full grown from seven to fifteen hundred pounds, and is sometimes eight feet high. Its horns sometimes expand six feet. The Moose breeds in May. They bring forth at first but one, but after the first they have two at a birth. These animals, like the common Deer, frequent rivers and lakes, where they feed on the roots of the water lily, and in the winter retire to the higher lands, where their height enables them to crop the overhanging branches of large trees, and their strength enables them to hold down the smaller trees until they strip them of their twigs and bark. The Moose may be taken in winter by the "long chase" on snow shoes, or in

Summer they may be shot at their feeding places in the marshes. They are very wary and their sense of smell is very acute. They can be trapped, but it requires a large trap weighing forty or more pounds, and a clog of sixty pounds fastened to it. The flesh of the Moose is much esteemed by hunters and trappers, being preferred generally to that of the common deer.

HOW TO CURE SKINS.

The most successful hunter or trapper can never expect to get the full benefit of his labor unless he knows how to cure his skins and prepare them for sale. This is no light matter, as on the appearance of the furs depends their value in market. Skins that have been riddled with shot, or that are damaged by being cut, are unsaleable or nearly so. So also are skins which have pieces of flesh on them. It is also very necessary that the skins should not be dried too much, and equally important that they should not be dried to little. Skins, even if really worth more, are often valued at low prices for any of the above reasons. Many valuable furs are often spoiled by boys and young trappers from bad treatment in some part of their curing. There are many things which can only be acquired by experience; but the following directions if carefully followed will enable most persons to cure their skins in a comparatively perfect manner.

1st. The Animal should be skinned as soon as possible after killing, but not until it is dry.

2d. All superfluous fat and meat should be carefully scraped off, using care not to injure the skin.

3d. Do not use preparations of any kind in curing skins. It is not necessary to even wash them, but stretch and dry them just as they are taken from the animal.

4th. Never hurry the drying process. Do not dry by the sun or by the fire. A cool, shady, sheltered place is to be desired. Some boys use a barn door for a stretcher, but in this case use the inside of the door, not the outside.

Lastly. Do not fail to ventilate your traps after using. A skin is sometimes spoiled, and often damaged by remaining long enough to get tainted.

HOW TO STRETCH SKINS.

To dry skins it is very important that they should be thoroughly stretched. They should be drawn tightly across something so as to draw the skin tight. This is done by nailing them on a flat board, or the side of a barn door, but of course in the woods this cannot be done, and as most skins are cured in the woods, some other means is necessary. And again, this method exposes only one side to the air. There are two or three kinds of stretchers much used by trappers, and adapted to the skins of different animals.

1st. Is the *Hoop Stretcher*, intended for skins of animals of large size, such as the Bear, Beaver, &c., which are best cured by spreading them the

full size. For this purpose cut a stick of flexible wood large enough to surround the skin where bent. If a single stick be not long enough, splice two short ones. The ends should be brought round and tied or spliced together. The skin should be taken from the animal by ripping from the lower part of the front teeth to the extreme point of the body, peeling around the eyes, lips and ears. The legs should not be ripped up. Then place it inside the hoop, fastened on opposite sides with twine or bark, until the loose parts are taken up, and the whole stretched so that it is nearly round, and as tight as it can be made. It should then be left to dry, after which it may be taken and packed for transportation. This is the only proper method for curing Deer skins.

THE BOW STRETCHER

is the most common way of treating the Muskrat skin. Cut the head off and rip with the knife from between the two teeth in lower jaw down the belly about two inches below where the fore-legs come out; then start the skin by cutting around the lips, ears and eyes, and strip it over the body with the fur inwards. Then take a birch or elm stick three and a half feet long, and bend it to the shape of an ox bow, and shove it into the skin; draw it tight and fasten by splitting a sliver in the stick and drawing the skin of the lip into it. This is the usual way, but the board stretcher is the best, as such skins are better stretched, keep in better shape, and are more easily packed. Board stretchers will last for years, but bows are gener-

ally broken in taking them out. They can seldom be used but once.

THE BOARD STRETCHER

is easily made as follows, and for all purposes, for small skins, is preferable to any other. Take a basswood board, or one of other light wood; have it two feet, four inches long, and three and one-half inches wide at one end, and two and one-eighth at the other, three-eighths of an inch thick. Chamfer it from the centre to the sides almost to an edge. Round and chamfer the small end about an inch up on the sides, split the board through the centre with a knife or saw. Finally, prepare a wedge of the same length and thickness, one inch wide at the large end and tapering to three-eighths of an inch at the small end, to be driven between the halves of the board. You then have a stretcher suitable for a Mink or Marten. Larger sizes are needed for larger animals. For a Wolf or Otter it should be 5 1-2 feet long, seven inches wide at the large end, when spread, and six inches at the small end.

In using these stretchers the skin should not be ripped from the body through the belly, but should be stripped off whole as follows: Begin with the hind feet and slit down to the vent. Cut around the vent and strip the skin from the bone of the tail with the half of the thumb nail, or a split stick. No other slits are necessary. Then peel the skin from the body by drawing it over itself leaving the fur side inward. In this condition the skin should be drawn on to the split board to its utmost length,

back on one side and belly on the other, and fastened by tacks or by notches cut in the edge of the board, and then the wedge should be driven between the two halves. Then make all fast by a tack at the root of the tail, and another on the opposite side. Then stretch the skin to its utmost, and it may then be hung away and left to dry. In stretching Otter skins in this way, the tail should be split, spread and tacked on a board.

THE MUSKRAT STRETCHER

is made of a board 3-16 of an inch thick, 20 inches long, six inches wide at one end, and tapering to five and one-half. Skin the animal, draw the skin tightly on the board, and tack. These can be very easily transported, and are very convenient in trapping small animals. Some trappers pretend to have many "*secrets*" for curing furs, but if the above directions are followed we will warrant the trapper as good furs and as good prices as by any method he can practice.

THE VADE MECUM,

OR

Hunter's and Trapper's Useful Companion.

THE BIRCH CANOE.

Among all other boats for hunting and fishing this is the favorite. The best are made by Indians, and it is of Indian origin. The great advantage is its *lightness;* and on this account it is preferred on all streams where "carrying places" are frequent. In size the Bark Canoe varies from fifteen to twenty feet in length, although they are made of all lengths, from ten to nearly forty feet. They can be made large enough to contain from ten to fifteen persons, besides necessary baggage or stores. The first thing necessary is the gunwale. This should be two strips for each side of the canoe, about one-fourth of an inch thick and an inch or more in width, one for the inside and the other for the outside of the edge. Then procure your bark. The part for the bottom of the Canoe should be in one whole piece, peeled very carefully, and as free from knots as possible. If a piece sufficiently large cannot be had, strips can be sewed on to the edges. When the bark is ready the length of the proposed Canoe should be measured on the ground at two stakes driven firmly into the earth close together at each end. The

ends of the bark are then to be folded on the middle line with the inside of the bark outward, and inserted between the stakes. These ends should extend out beyond the stakes far enough to fold them over and to sew the whole firmly together. The Canoe is then formed "in the rough." Then at each end place a small log underneath for the Canoe to rest on, and to allow the bottom to form a curve downward. Then place the gunwale in position, fit the bark between the strips and sew the whole together with a winding stitch, regularly, or in sections the entire length. Next, the inside of the Canoe is lined with strips of cedar, from one-fourth to one-half of an inch thick, and an inch or more wide, placed longitudinally and fastened with a piece of pine pitch. These strips should be several feet long and should lap neatly where their ends meet. The knees or ribs are then made of strips of ash or any wood that may be convenient, provided it is firm and elastic. They should be about one-fourth of an inch thick and from one to two inches wide. They should be placed crosswise of the Canoe, bent down at the bottom and sides, and their ends securely fastened under the gunwales. They must be placed closely together with the same spaces between them the whole length of the Canoe, as they strengthen the Canoe, keep it in shape and the lining in its place. After all this is done, the seams and the whole inside of the Canoe should be smeared with pitch, and two or three cross pieces placed between the gunwales to keep the sides in shape. A square or three cornered awl should be used for doing the sewing,

and for thread use cedar, tamarack or spruce roots, soaked in hot water. They form a perfect substitute for thread, and are much better for many reasons.

THE DUG OUT, OR LOG CANOE.

Although the bark Canoe is best for all purposes, yet the trapper and hunter often finds himself obliged to build the log Canoe, which is very simple, and can be made quite light, and is serviceable, strong and quite desirable. It may be made of whitewood, basswood, ash or pine; the latter are the best. The log should be sound, large and free from knots, and should be hewn on two opposite sides to a depth corresponding to the depth of the intended Canoe, on one side the hewing should not be straight, but should run out at the ends to the surface of the log so as to give a suitable rise at bow and stern. This hewing can be done before the log is cut off from the tree. After doing this turn the log down with that side uppermost to which is to form the gunwale. Next, strike the outlines with a line and chalk, or coal. In laying out a Canoe, measure the length into three equal sections. The two end sections for the bow and stern. For a very large Canoe the end for the bow should be hewn somewhat sharper than for the stern, but at the same time the width of the boat at the point where the curves of the bow start below the gunwale, should be a little greater than at any other point. This can be easily done when finishing off the sides after the Canoe is struck out. The only object of giving the Ca-

noe the greatest width at this point is to give ease of motion when in the water. A very small Canoe may be curved with the same sharpness at both ends, and it can then run either end first. A Canoe of this shape is one of the swiftest boats that can be made. Both ends of a well made Canoe are carved upward from the middle of the gunwale, and the stern rises a little from the line of the bottom. If the log is sound (and none other should be used) a Canoe may be worked very thin, and be so light as to be easily carried. The tools required for making a log Canoe are a good axe, broad axe, an adze, a round adze, and a shave; a large draw shave is the best. A small augur is also desirable, and a cross-cut saw also, but either can be dispensed with if unobtainable.

BATTEAUX

can be made of thin boards in the form of a flat bottomed boat. Take two boards that are sound and free from knots, and of a length and width, equal respectively to the length and depth of the proposed boat. Set the boards up edgeways, the width on the gunwale apart, and nail a cross piece midway between the ends; then turn over the boards, and with a draw shave shape the other edges to a proper curve for the bottom; next nail a board across the middle of the bottom and bring the ends of the boards together and nail them to the bow and stern pieces. Then make the bottom by nailing boards crosswise, taking care to give the sides the proper curve; when all the parts are put together, caulk all the joints and the Batteaux is ready for use.

THE PROFITS OF TRAPPING.

The profits of trapping depend altogether upon the success of the trapper. It is impossible to estimate them, but to give an idea of the prices realized from furs we append the latest price list for them, as given June 1st, 1868, by C. G. Gunther & Sons, 503 & 504 Broadway, N. Y. City, who are probably as extensive dealers as any in the United States.

PRICE LIST.

BEAR, Northern, according to size and quality	Prime	From	$8.00 to	$15.00
" Southern and Northern yearlings	"	"	3.00 to	8.00
BEAVER, Northern, per skin, Parchment.	"	"	3.00 to	4.00
" Southern and ordinary, per skin.	"	"	0.75 to	1.50
BADGER	"	"	0.50 to	0.75
CAT, WILD, Northern and Eastern States, cased	"	"	0.30 to	0.50
" " Southern and Western	"	"	0.25 to	0.40
" House, ordinary	"	"	0.10 to	0.20
" " Black furred	"	"	0.30 to	0.40
FISHER, Northern and Eastern, according to size and color,	"	"	5.00 to	8.00
" Penn. Ohio and Western...do...	"	"	2.00 to	5.00
" Southern.....do...	"	"	1.00 to	3.00
FOX, Silver.....do...	"	"	10.00 to	50.00
" Cross, Northern and Eastern..do...	"	"	4.00 to	6.00
" Penn., N. Jersey and Ohio.do..	"	"	3.00 to	4.00
" Red, Northern and Eastern...do...	"	"	1.00 to	1.50
" South Penn, New Jersey and North Ohio.....do...	"	"	0.75 to	1.00
" Southern and Western....do...	"	"	0.35 to	0.75
" Grey, Northern and Eastern cased do	"	"	0.60 to	0.70
" Southern and Western.....do...	"	"	0.40 to	0.50
" Kitt.....do...	"	"	0.40 to	0.60
LYNX,.....do...	"	"	1.00 to	1.50
MARTENS States.....do..	"	"	0.75 to	1.50
MINK, N. Y, N Eng'd, Minn. and Ca do.	"	"	5.00 to	7.00
" N. J., Pa., Ohio, Mich., Ind., Wis. and Iowa.....do...	"	"	3.00 to	5.00
" Md., Va., Ky., Mo. and all Southern do	"	"	1.00 to	3.00
MUSKRAT, Northern N. Y. and Eastern.	Spring	"	0.32 to	0.34
" Western, including Pa., and Ohio.	"	"	0.24 to	0.27
" Northern, and Eastern.....	Winter,	"	0 22 to	0.25

MUSKRAT, Western, including Pa. and Ohio	Winter,	From	$0.18	to $0.20
" Southern, prime, and Northern, Fall	Average,	"	0.12	to 0.18
OTTER, Northern and Eastern, and North Western, according to size and color	Prime	"	5.00	to 7.00
" Penn., N. Jersey, Ohio and Western,	"	"	4.00	to 6.00
" Ky., Md., Va., Kansas and vicinity,	"	"	3.00	to 5.00
" North and South Carolina, and Georgia,	"	"	2.00	to 3.50
OPOSSUM, Northern	Prime Cased	"	0.08	to 0.10
" Southern and open Northern	"	"	0.05	to 0.08
RACCOON, Michigan, N. Indiana, Indian handled, dark, according to size and color	Prime	"	0.80	to 1.00
" No. Ohio, Ill., Iowa, Wis. and Minnesota	"	"	0.60	to 0.75
" N. Y., and E. States and N. Pensylvania	"	"	0.40	to 0.65
" N. J., S. Penn., Ind., Ill., Mo. and Kansas	"	"	0.30	to 0.50
" Md., Va., Kentucky, Arkansas and Tenn.	"	"	0.25	to 0.40
" North and South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Alabama	"	"	0.15	to 0.30
RABBITS	Prime, Cased	"	0.02	to 0.03
SKUNKS, prime black, No. 1	"	"	0.80	to 0.90
" white and black, streaked, No. II	"	"	0.30	to 0.40
" Out seasoned and very white	"	"	0.06	to 0.15
WOLF SKINS, Mountain Skins, large	"	"	3.00	to 4.00
" " Prairie, average prime skins	"	"	1.00	to 1.75

The above quotations are for all kinds of prime skins according to size and color. If skins are better, or not as good, prices will vary accordingly. Skunk skins with only two white finger marks on head, are counted as black. Green skins are worth twelve cents less per skin than dried and well stretched skins. In order to realize the best prices, in trapping as in other pursuits, great care must be taken to have skins well cured, dried and stretched. Time is well spent in taking care of them, as good furs will always command good prices, while ill cured ones will often not sell at any price. As in everything else, experience is necessary and the young trapper if he has no instructor must act for himself, and in a short time will be able to cure his skins as well as the best.

FISHING.

To be a successful fisherman several things are necessary. We shall give in a few words some instructions although but few are necessary.

FISHING IN THE WINTER.

In Winter Trout may easily be caught in places where the water is not too deep, by cutting holes in the ice and using the common hook and line. By using what are called *tip ups*, one person can attend to several lines, each of course being placed in a different hole. Take a strip of board two inches wide and two feet long, and bore a hole near one end, through the hole put a stick long enough to reach across the hole in the ice, thereon fasten your line to the short end of the strip and drop the hooks in the water. When a fish bites, the long end of the stick will tip up and can easily be seen. For bait use Cow's udder, or almost any sort of meat. Salmon, trout, pickerel, &c., are also caught in the same manner.

FISHING IN WINTER WITH NETS.

By using gill nets, fish may be caught in the winter under the ice as follows: Take a long smooth pole and fasten the net to it with rings or loops. The rings should be plenty large enough to slip along the pole easily; if preferred the net can be hung on a rope and each end fastened to the end

of the pole; now make two holes in the ice as far apart as the length of the net and sink the pole and the net under the ice and fasten between the holes, attach two cords to one end of the net near the pole and bring up and fasten through the ice one near each hole. When you wish to examine the net draw together at one end of the hole by means of one cord and take it up through the hole which should be kept open. Remove the fish and drop back and spread out by means of the other cord. Sometimes nets are swung without any pole. In this case several holes are cut and the net arranged with cords so it can be examined through the middle holes.

SPEARING SALMON TROUT.

This can be done in the late autumn. In order to be successful, good spawning beds are necessary. A good jack, plenty of fat pine, good weather, a good boat and spear and some experience. The jack is a sort of iron grid iron made of iron wire or rods and placed on a stick or post two or three feet high in the bow of the boat. In the jack is placed fat pine or birch bark, which when lighted gives light to those who paddle the boat and to the spearman. A *good* spear is very necessary. It should be made with four or five barbed prongs about five inches in length, and three quarters of an inch apart on a line with each other. The four outside prongs should be barbed with inside edges, and the middle one on both edges. The spear should be made of the best steel and carefully tempered. To spear Salmon Trout the operation is about as

follows: Having arrived at the spawning ground kindle the fire in your jack, then stand near the bow spear in hand and watch the bottom for fish. The one who paddles the Canoe or boat should be in the stern and follow the spearman's directions in propelling the boat. The spearman must stand firmly in the boat and when he strikes at a fish should allow for the reflection of the water. A fish is always much deeper than he appears to be, and if you aim at where he *appears* to be you will most surely miss him. Practice is necessary to be a good spearman and like everything else connected with hunting and trapping can only be obtained by considerable experience. There are several secret arts much advertised as very valuable. We give them here, although they are not nearly as valuable as some suppose. All the following are extensively advertised at from $1 to $5 each. The first one we give cost the one who purchased it $5. It *may* be worth it. This however is a "trapping" secret, but we give it here for what it is worth.

RECIPE FOR TRAPPING.

No. 1. *To Catch Game,*—such as Mink, Muskrats, Weasels, Raccoons, Otter, &c. Take 1 oz. of Valerian, 1-2 oz. of Commercial Musk, 1 pint of Whiskey. Mix together, and let it stand for two weeks. Put a few drops of this on your bait.

No. 2. *To Catch Foxes.*—Take oil of amber and beaver's oil, each equal parts, and rub them over the trap before setting it. Set in the usual way.

No. 3. *To Catch Mink.*—Take oil of amber and beaver's oil, and rub over the trap. Bait with fish or birds.

No. 4. *To Catch Muskrat.*—In the female muskrat near the vagina, is a small bag which holds from 30 to 40 drops. Now all the trapper has to do, is to procure a few female muskrats and squeeze the contents of this bag into a vial. Now when in quest of muskrats, sprinkle a few drops of this liquid on the bushes over and around the trap. This will attract the male muskrats in large numbers, and if the traps are properly arranged, large numbers may be taken.

No. 5. *Chinese Art of Catching Fish.* — Take *Cocculus Indicus*, pulverize, and mix with *dough*, then scatter it broad-cast over the water as you would sow seed. The fish will seize it with great avidity, and will instantly become so intoxicated that they will turn belly up on top of the water, by dozens, hundreds or thousands, as the case may be. All that you now have to do, is to have a boat or other convenience to gather them up, and as you gather, put them into a tub of clean water, and presently they will be as lively and healthy as ever

This means of taking fish, and the manner of doing it, has heretofore been known to but few. The value of such knowledge admits of no question. *This manner of taking fish does not injure the flesh in the least.*

No. 6. *Secret Art of Catching Fish.*—Put the oil of rhodium on the bait when fishing with a hook, and you will always succeed.

The above are undoubtedly of value in some places, but in using No. 5, care must be taken to get

the fish into fresh water at once, otherwise they will not be fit to eat and might be poisonous.

HEAD WATERS OF THE PENOBSCOT.

The following is from the pen of the Rev. John Todd, and as it gives an excellent description of life in the wilderness we publish it and trust it will interest our readers.

The morning at last broke, but I was too unwell to proceed, and my companion and guides were very patient in waiting for me. Near by was a beaver-house, at the foot of a small pond; it was in the shape of a small hay-stack, though much smaller.

The animal first cuts down young trees (with his teeth of course), and then cuts sticks off about two and a half or three feet long, and about as large as the arm of a man. These sticks are laid up so as to make the house octagonal or eight sided, and laid up just as children build a "cob-house," but they are all of the same length and size. Then with his tail he plasters the house inside and out, so as to make it perfectly round. This is done with mud, and the sticks are all covered and concealed. Then he has it divided into rooms, one below the water in which he keeps his birch bark, &c, for winter food. The second apartment is up out of water where he sleeps high and dry, but lest the waters should rise in the melting of the spring snows, he has a third room higher up still where he is always dry. It would be very difficult for

any architect to make proportions more perfect, or a dome more beautiful. We were greatly interested in the habits of these animals, and the wonders of their instincts. A single beaver has been followed more than sixty miles in the wilderness, and finally caught by the more shrewd hunter, this beaver followed up a river, and then passed through a ten mile lake, and then up another river forty miles; but whenever he came to a brook that emptied into his travelling river he would stop, cut off sticks and leave them just above the brook to show that he had gone past the brook; but if he turned into the brook he would leave sticks just below the brook to show he had turned in there; this was to communicate, not with the keen hunter, but any beaver that might wish to follow him. Thus the very precision of his instincts makes him a prey to the stronger sagacity of man.

After the recovery of strength sufficient to walk, for which I hope I returned unfeigned thanks to God, we resumed our tramp, and when we struck the Penobscot we found it a powerful, rapid, dangerous river.

But the Indians would run their canoes down rapids that were perfectly frightful. Sometimes we would get out and clamber around the huge rocks, and look with admiration upon Pamah, as the old man on his knees in the middle of his frail canoe would dash down falls that made one shudder to think of going down.

Sometimes his canoe would rush down among the rocks, whirl round and leap like a thing of life; but whirling or leaping, spinning or rushing, Pamah

never for a moment let it go out of his control. He would whirl and turn round as quick as a cat.

And now we began to be short of provisions, and there was no way but to take the life of a moose.

A moose is the largest species of deer, a beautiful and a homely, a graceful and an awkward, creature. He is very large and tall, and will weigh, frequently, a thousand pounds. Suppose you were to take the round body of a beautiful horse, cut his tail off short, give him the slender and beautiful legs of a deer, put an ass's head on a camel's neck, and on that head a pair of horns that will sometimes weigh ninety pounds, and extend six feet, each horn, and then paint him black as night and you have a pretty good moose. He will sometimes be eight feet high. The way we got them was this: In the darkest part of the short nights—for so far north the twilight of evening and the dawn of morning seem to meet within about two hours—you take your seat in the bow of the canoe. The indian sits at the other end with his paddle, which he moves noiselessly, without ever taking it out of the water. The mosquitoes, the gnats, now come down upon you with a vengeance and a power that is unspeakable; you may brush, and rub, and turn, but there they are myriads and myriads. Off you go over the beautiful Penobscot, over which the stars and bright aurora borealis and the graceful weeping elms and maples are hanging and watching. Presently you hear a moose thrash like a huge ox, and then he blows like a whale; that is, he goes into the river where the water is perhaps seven or eight feet deep, and thrusting his head down to

the bottom of the river he eats the long grass that grows there, and when his mouth is full, or when he must breathe he raises his head up out of the water and blows and snorts. When you first hear him, he is perhaps two miles off. Silently the Indian shoots the canoe towards him. As you come near him you begin to tremble and forget the biting of the insects and think only of the great game before you. Slowly the canoe goes towards him, keeping near the bank of the river, and in the deep shade of the trees. As you approach the moose you see a huge black something, without shape or form, only it is the blackest thing to be seen. Which way he stands or where his head is you cannot even guess. The Indian now gently shakes the canoe to let you know that he shall go no nearer. The black spot seems a great way off; you raise your rifle and guess as well as you can, and the fire leaps from the weapon of death, and the moose will probably be found within twenty rods of the spot, next morning. It seems cruel to kill so large a creature for food for four men; but as to the cruelty and suffering, there is more suffering in a load of starving, bleating calves, which goes down the Hudson every night, than in killing a dozen moose every day. We killed but a few, and the skins (we gave them to our poor guides) were worth four dollars the skin. I found that the moose had no need to fear me or my rifle, for my companion never drew a trigger without killing.

The meat is very lean, juicy and tender. We found it best fried in our short handled frying-pan; but the Indians preferred it roasted on sticks over

a hot fire. I forgot to say that in the Summer the animal is jet black, hair soft and glossy. The Indians roast the shanks and legs and get out the large marrow and eat it with great avidity. It is the only butter or oil they can get, and the civilized man can hardly imagine how the human system craves for oil, especially in the cold climate. I never saw men at the daintiest turtle soup eat with greater relish than did our guides when they had a pile of "marrow bones" before them; but the "moose's upper lip," that is considered the *ne plus ultra* of all eating by those who are great judges in such matters. I have never heard any food—not even the beaver's tail—so highly commended as this. It is unlike anything I ever tasted; but whether it was because I was unwell, or because my taste needed cultivation, I do not know, but though we had the upper lip many times, I never tasted it but once.

Here on the Penobscot in the very wilds of nature, we found "Peter Mountain," an aged Indian living alone with his beautiful dog "Watch" in a little wigwam. He was a short chuck of a fellow, with long, coarse, grizzly hair, like a moose's mane, with no covering to his head, a flannel shirt and coarse trousers for his clothing. He was very deaf, mostly blind, and a half ludicrous, half hideous creature. He had been in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company for seven years, had been to the Rocky Mountains, and in every great forest in the land. He was quick, agile and powerful in body. He joined himself to us and helped us, simply for company and board, and a hard bargain we should

had at that if we had had to buy our provisions, for the amount which the three Indians ate was incredible. They would get our supper, see us eat, then begin to roast, eat and talk in their tongue, and often the next morning would dawn before they got through supper. Fashionable people who turn day into night, and night into day have only reached the spot in refinement at which the savage has always been. In the night he eats and hunts, and in the day sleeps. Our guides were, however, faithful, attentive, and I never intimated a wish to Pamah but he made me realize it if within the bounds of possibility. It was difficult to make them understand sacred truths, in religion especially. When we tried to press the conscience with religious truth, they would parry it by saying: "Me no think" (don't understand it), or, "Indian know that already." They were very great talkers with each other, and very cheerful and buoyant in their stories.

A Young Trapper's Experience.

BY JOHN P. HUTCHINS.

We select the following from "The Trapper's Guide," a valuable book. Price $1.50 sent post-free by the publishers of this work.

My earliest recollections are of the forest. My father was an experienced hunter and trapper, and when I was but five years of age I accompanied him on one of his expeditions into the great Maine wilderness in search of game and fish. I have a dim recollection on that occasion of hooking on to a very large fish, and of being unable, with my slender strength, to get him into the boat in which I was seated. This childish disappointment made quite an impression upon me, and I used anxiously to look forward to the time when I should be a match for any of the beasts of the woods, or the fish in the waters.

I was sufficiently old to endure the hardships of forest life, when my father took up his abode on the southern border of the great New York forest, sometimes called "John Brown's Tract." There we prosecuted the business of trapping in earnest.

We stretched a line of traps nearly forty miles in length directly into the heart of the wilderness, over rivers, mountains, lakes and plains; and along

this line we diligently trapped the otter, fisher, marten, mink, muskrat and raccoon.

To give an idea of the management of a practical trapper in the woods, I will describe in detail the operations by which we subsisted, and took our game while in the woods.

As our line of traps was about forty miles in length, and of course involved a journey of eighty miles to and from our home, our outfit became at once a very important consideration. In the first place, we must have enough to eat, and the means wherewith to cook our food; and at the same time we must not overload ourselves with luggage, as every pound of our personal effects must be carried on our backs for long days, through a pathless wilderness. The object then was to secure the greatest amount of nutriment with the least possible weight.

And then, not only food, but other absolute necessaries must be provided. We must have the means for procuring fire; for securing game and fish; for taking and disposing of our furs; for keeping warm in a cold night, &c.; all of which weigh down seriously, but can by no means be overlooked or omitted.

I may as well here remark, that about one fifth of the luggage generally recommended by writers and book makers who treat of life in the woods, as suitable for the hunter's or trapper's outfit, will cover all his absolute wants. The remaining four-fifths the old woodman will consider as luxuries if not superfluities.

I suppose that, as a general thing writers are

not practical hunter's or trapper's, and this may account for the discrepancy I have mentioned.

A trapper makes great account of his fire. Aside from its primary use in cooking his food, it oftentimes supplies the place of house and bedding. Some carry with them a light woollen blanket, but oftener the woodsman has only the earth for his resting place, and the heavens for his counterpane, a sheltered nook, where the wind cannot blow too rudely, a few hemlock boughs for his bed, and a fire just in proportion to the temperature of the season.

Aside from the necessary supply of traps, the trapper's outfit can be reduced to about the following items:

First. A basket or knapsack, to carry on his back, and large enough to hold provisions and other necessaries for the journey.

Second. Eatables, consisting principally, or wholly, of pork and flour; or, what is better on some accounts, a mixture of flour and indian meal, in the proportion of two parts flour to one of meal.

Add to this a little saleratus and a small bag of salt, and a man can carry food sufficient with what game and fish he can procure to last him a month. It is much easier to carry the flour in the woods and bake it as it is wanted, than to attempt to use bread already baked, as it is lighter and less bulky. When the woodman wishes for bread, he mixes the flour in a basin of warm water, adds a little saleratus and salt, and bakes it in his frying pan, or if that is not at hand on a chip.

Third. Cooking utensils, namely: a small frying pan, two tin basins of the capacity of one and two quarts respectively, and a small tin cup for drinking.

Fourth. Implements for general use, namely: an axe, gun, knife, and pocket compass.

Lastly, and above all, a good supply of matches.

Every trapper should have a companion to assist him, as the same gun, axe and cooking utensils will suffice for both, and it is much less labor for two than for one to carry them.

When the business of trapping is prosecuted on the borders of lakes and large streams, much hard labor is saved by the use of a boat. Those who make free use of boats are more lavish in their outfit, as the labor of transportation is thereby very much reduced.

I suspect that Mr. Newhouse has been more familiar with this method than myself; and this may account for any discrepancy between us in respect to outfit.

When I began life as a trapper I lived, as I have said, with my father, on the southern border of the great New York wilderness; so that our line of traps commenced not far from our home.

This line was by degrees extended further and further into the forest, until it had reached the limit beyond which the provisions we would carry would not hold out. We began by carrying our traps into the woods, and distributing them along our intended line before the trapping season began; So that when the time arrived that fur was suitable

for market, we should have only to set our traps and bait them.

At the proper season we would shoulder our packs, containing as much provisions as we could carry, and commence carefully setting and baiting our traps. This process was continued as long as our provisions would allow, and then we would return on the same line, examining our traps, skinning the animals taken, and stretching their furs. After a short interval, this process was repeated, and kept up while the season lasted.

Our usual course was to follow rivers and streams, and visit all the lakes in the vicinity of our line. When following the streams, or the shores of the lakes, we would trap the beaver, otter, mink and muskrat; and when our line extended over land and away from the water, we took the marten, fisher and raccoon.

Our methods of setting and baiting traps, and our contrivances for circumventing animals were generally very like those recommended by Mr. Newhouse, and need not be detailed.

In the course of my experience I had considerable practice in taking the fisher, and became somewhat familiar with its ways. This is a very pretty creature, with glossy black fur, and a long bushy tail. But, like the cat, it has a temper that is not so mild and agreeable as its appearance might indicate; nor does the close embrace of one of Newhouse's traps tend to mollify it at all.

It frequently makes sad havoc with the trap and its apurtenances, and sometimes gets away after being fairly caught. I well remember a try-

ing experience I had with one of these animals in the North Woods. I had seen his tracks, and had carefully set my trap with all the usual fixings and fastenings, in full faith of his ultimate capture, but on going to the place the next day, trap and chain were clean gone, and all the fixings demolished. The fisher had been there, and had been caught, but instead of submitting handsomely to his fate, had gone and robbed me of a good Newhouse trap. (It was not Newhouse's fault.) He was a very large animal, and the spring pole was not strong enough to swing him clear of the ground. So after demolishing the inclosure in which the trap was set, and making a general smash of things around, he threw himself upon the pole, actually gnawed it off below where the ring was fastened, and left for parts unknown.

How he finally disposed of the valuables he carried off, or whether he drew them about for the rest of his life, is left for conjecture.

I have long since abandoned the woods, and my trapper's life seems like a dream of the past; and yet I look back to it as a long and pleasant dream, despite of its many hardships and privations.

In entering the woods I seemed to leave behind the jostlings and heartaches of crowded society—the great "*tom*" in which men are tumbling and chafing,—and went forward into the freedom and peace of undisturbed nature.

DRESSING AND TANNING.

However valuable the skin or fur of any animal, it is easily rendered worthless by not being properly dressed and cured. We propose in a few words to give reliable methods for tanning Fur, &c., and will begin with

THE MUSKRAT.

The skin of the Muskrat is not only very tender, but as the flesh is very tough they will not bear fleshing until they have lain for several hours in a tan liquor made as follows: one peck Wheat Bran to four or five gallons of soft Water, quite warm, not hot, stir the Bran in the Water and let it stand in a warm place until it ferments, when add 3 pounds of Salt and stir until dissolved, then add and stir in slowly one to one and one-fourth pounds of Sulphuric Acid. The skin should be soaked for Muskrat say six hours, then flesh it on the flesh side of a Sheep skin.

OTTER.

This is skinned by ripping down the back of each hind leg until the slits meet in the crotch, skin the body whole, don't rip up the belly, put a split stick over the bone of the tail between the hide and body and skin in this way; when skinned draw the hide over a stretcher and let it remain until dry.

THE FOX

is skinned very much the same and the skin treated the same. To skin the

BEAVER

you must rip the skin same as you would a Sheep. Stretch it in all ways as much as possible, then it is to be dressed with equal parts of Rock salt and Alum dissolved in Water and made about as thick as cream by stirring in coarse Flour. This should be spread on nearly half an inch thick to be scraped off when dry and repeated if one time is not enough. This same process of dressing applies likewise to Otter skins.

MINK.

The skins should be treated with the same dressing, except when the paste is dry it should be scraped off with a smooth piece of hoop iron or a spoon bowl; the skin should be stretched very tightly else the skin may shrink. Mink skins are in their prime from Dec. until about May, the rest of the year they are thin and poor.

RACCOON.

The skin of the Raccoon should be nailed to boards to dry, then treated to a paste of 1 oz. Alum; 1 oz. Salt; about 1-2 drachm Sulphuric Acid; 2 gills Water and a little Wheat Bran It should when dry be scraped off with a spoon or other thing as in case of Mink skins. To work the skin soft, instead of nailing it on boards, roll it up and work it soft.

BEAR SKINS

are tanned in nearly same manner as Raccoon skins.

DYEING HIDES.

To color Buck skin Buff.—Five parts of Whiting to two parts of Ochre (yellow,) and mix them with Water to a paste, make into cakes and dry. When a dressed skin is dry rub one of the balls over the surface, rub the powder in. Take a piece of sandpaper and raise a nap on the leather by going over with it.

To color Black use clear Logwood; after it is dry use Copperas Water to blacken it. Be careful and not use too much Copperas.

To color Dark Brown.—Five lbs. of Oak Bark; four pounds of Fustic; 14 ounces of Logwood. Use Alum Water (strong) to make it strike in.

To color Drab.—Mix blue Clay with soft Soap; add blue vitriol to shade the color. It can be made any shade you wish.

Dark Brown.—One way is to take 1-2 oz. Crystalized Nitrate of Silver and 4 ounces of Carb. Ammonia; 3 gills of soft water. Apply to the surface of the fur with a brush. It should be kept in a bottle well corked. One application makes a handsome brown and by repeating a splendid black can be obtained.

Remarks on Tanning.—Of course the first operation is to soak the hide, as no hide can be proper-

ly tanned unless it has been soaked and broken on a fleshing beam. If the hide has not been salted add a little salt and soak it in soft Water. In order to be thoroughly soaked green hides should remain in this liquor from nine to twelve days, of course the time varies with the thickness of the hide. The following liquor is used to remove hair or wool, viz: ten gallons cold water, (soft,) eight quarts slaked Lime and same quantity of Wood Ashes. Soak until the hair or wool will pull off easily.

As it frequently happens it is desirable to cure the hide and keep the hair clean, the following paste should be made, viz: Equal parts of lime and hard wood ashes (lime should be slaked,) and made into a paste with soft Water. This should be spread on the flesh side of the hide and the skin rolled up flesh side in and placed in a tub just covering it with water. It should remain ten days or until the hair will pull out easily, then scrape off with a knife.

Oil Dressing.—For curing Deer skins, &c., take the green hide, as soon as removed from the animal and grain it. This is done by getting a beam seven or eight inches through and six to eight feet long, with two legs in one end and the other resting on the ground so that it will stand at a steep slant. The beam should be of hard wood, should be clean and smooth and with no ridges on it. Take a knife, the corners should be whet smooth so as not to cut the skin. Set down the upper end of the beam against your belly and lay on the

skin, *hair* side down and take off all unequal substances before you turn the hair side up. Then commence to grain by beginning with the neck of the skin next to you, shoving it against the hair, holding firmly and using some strength it will soon begin to go and bring a streak of grain. In this way hides are grained when green; when dry they have to be soaked in Lime and Water until mellow and then treated same as a green hide.

Dressing Deer Skin.—Put the skin into this liquid while warm, viz., eight quarts rain-water to 1 pint soft-soap. Warm it. Then punch the hide or work it with a stick, and let it lay one day. It is then to be taken out and wrung—rolled between two logs—or even a wringing machine will be better. Then stretch it until it is dry, in the sun is best, or by a hot fire. Then oil it thoroughly with any oil convenient. It should then be treated to the same bath of suds (heat quite warm) and lay another day. Then pull it out and dry as before. Any oil will do, but good fresh butter is better than anything else. When the skin is dry rub it with ochre, which will give it a splendid yellow color. There are a dozen other methods, but the above is better than any other, and we do not care to occupy space with all the numerous processes.

We have given all that is necessary to enable the Trapper to cure his hides, and do not wish to publish useless recipes.

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